



My dear Speer -

Last night I had a little touch of fever, so am not speaking this morning in the Dartman College, but am writing instead.

I am very sorry that my Report is not yet ready to send to the Board. It will probably go to press tomorrow and come from

also feel more clearly the importance of  
such work among the educated classes.  
I pray that the little pamphlet may elicit  
a deeper interest in India and draw  
more attention to the needs of the students  
in this Empire.

God's blessing is resting in a  
marked measure upon our work here  
nowhead and I feel most encouraged  
by our work among the Christian Young

the press in two weeks.

When you read it you will see that I could not well hasten its preparation. I want to get it printed so that you and your colleagues may find it easier to read it and so that friends to whom I have not time to write may know something of the work.

My hope is that after reading it the Board will not only gain a clearer insight into my work, but

men. He joins me in sending kind regards.  
My wife is with my mother in Kolha-  
pur. With warmest Christian greetings  
for Mrs. Speer and yourself, I am

Yours in our coming King  
Robert C. Wilder

P.S. I did not tell the Volunteers at Ludhiana  
that you were expecting to accompany Mott,  
since Mott did not authorize me to do so. Let  
me however assure you that we all will rejoice  
to see you in our midst.

Personal.

RECEIVED  
MAR 29 1895  
NEW YORK

Norheim -

March 29<sup>th</sup>

1895.

My very dear Speer -  
Still the Printer is  
not ready; but the Board  
should not be kept waiting  
any longer, so I am sending  
you a bound proof copy  
of my little book.

My wife and I hope  
that this little book will lead  
to a deeper interest in the  
work and to more earnest  
prayer for us both, and  
among those who pray may  
we count yourself and Mrs. Speer?

This is foreign mail day,  
so I must be brief.



I have written to Mr. McWilliams about the invitation from Poona. He will doubtless let you see my letter.

There are many things to tell about the work. Can we talk these over, i.e. are you coming with Matt? I can speak of many things better than write. God has in the past two years given me splendid opportunities of seeing all kinds of mission work in this land and my conviction deepens that there should be a radical change along one definite line. Unless there be a deepening of Spiritual Life in the Native Church I fear

for the future of Christianity  
in India.

One day I was talking to a  
Missionary in Calcutta about a  
Brahm who was on the threshold  
of the kingdom. "What Church  
should he join," I said.

She replied "I cannot recom-  
mend any of the many Bengali  
Christian churches." At last she  
thought of one pastor who  
might help him spiritually,  
but she feared placing the new  
convert in the Christian commu-  
nity, lest he be shocked and  
alienated by the conduct of the  
Christian young men.

This Missionary has been in  
Calcutta many years and is  
an excellent worker.

Can we expect - the native Church to reach a higher spiritual life than that of the missionaries?

So my feeling is that much prayer and tactful effort should go forth for our dear missionaries.

Many have never been taught these truths and some respond most earnestly at the first mention of them.

Will you not join us in prayer that the missionaries in India may know experimentally the fulness of the Spirit? You will doubtless read much between the lines in my book, especially the last chapter.

Have I acknowledged your letters of Jan. 98 22<sup>d</sup>?



They were a great comfort & my wife and me, for after reading them we had a settled conviction that you understood us and that you knew how deeply we desired & know His will and follow His leading.

Many thanks for sending "A Study of the Character of Christ"

With kindest regards from us both, I am

yours affectionately  
Robert S. Wilder  
Kolhapur,

S. M. C.

India.

P.S. Please tell Mr. Dulles that we are looking for a remittance from him.

f.c.m.s  
Intelligence  
Dec. 1894 p. 955

Free Church Manse

Mark St

Calcutta

7<sup>th</sup> Nov 1894

DEC 3 - 1894

MARK ST

My dear Sir

I am a stranger to you  
& you to me, but we have a  
mutual friend in Robert A.  
Wilden who with his wife is  
now under my roof.

Your Society naturally think  
of Mr Wilden chiefly as a  
missionary to the natives of this  
country, & I am not sure  
if you can adequately have  
realized how extraordinarily helpful  
Mr Wilden has been to Christians,  
- I mean Christian missionaries from  
Europe & America. This is

a matter which it is difficult  
to mention in any Report, & Mr  
Wilden would be the last man to  
try to do so. But <sup>it</sup> is a fact  
- & a fact of incalculable  
importance - that Mr Wilden's  
address, & conversation, & manner  
of life, have been the means under  
God of deepening spiritual life  
in many workers & in leading  
them to do their work more in  
the power & fulness of the Holy  
Ghost than before. For a year  
regular monthly meetings for the  
deepening of spiritual life have been  
held in Calcutta, largely attended by  
missionaries of all denominations.  
These meetings are now officially  
recognized by the Calcutta missionary  
conference, & are under the charge  
of a committee of which I am  
convener. It was largely due

to Mr Wilder's influence that  
these meetings came into being.

Now, I have heard that your Society is contemplating the settlement of Mr Wilder in a comparatively small town or in a country district, where his opportunities of doing good to other workers would be comparatively limited. I am taking the liberty of writing to say that in my opinion, & in the opinion of others acquainted with ~~the~~ Mr Wilder & his work, this would not be to employ his talents & the peculiar grace which God seems to have vouchsafed to him, to the best advantage. We should gladly see him stay on in Calcutta, but if that is impossible then Bombay seems a very suitable place

for his settling; - a large important  
centre full of workers to whom he  
might be the means of bringing a  
blessing.

I am not asking or  
advising that he shd. be set apart  
for the work of quickening other  
men's lives: that would be to  
put him in an unviduous position:

but while pursuing his important  
labours among the Students of Bom-  
bay in the same way as he <sup>has</sup> pursued  
them in Calcutta, opportunities  
wd. be afforded of unobtrusively  
doing work of the nature indicated.

Mr Wilson himself will probably  
do nothing to influence your decision  
& he does not know that I am  
writing you; but I know he has  
grave doubts as to Kolhapur being  
the fittest sphere for him. He  
recognizes that God has most honoured  
his work among Christians.

Assuring you that I have not  
written this letter without prayerful  
consideration I am yrs sincerely  
David Reid



copy.

At Poona & within the Sacha Par-  
Road Church the first day of  
August in the year one thousand  
eight hundred and ninety-five:—  
Which day the Kirk-Session of  
Poona being met, and duly  
constituted:

Inter Alia,

The Moderator made a reference  
to the mission of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Wilder  
& Moorhead in Poona. Whereupon  
the following minute was  
adopted:—

The Kirk-Session thank God  
for the coming in their midst  
of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Wilder & Moorhead of  
Students' Volunteer Movement  
& the special meetings they  
have held for the spiritual  
upbuilding of Native Christians  
of Poona. The Session rejoice  
at the good attendance at these  
meetings, and fully trust that

the words spoken on such important subjects as that of assurance, reading of God's Word, prayer & may rouse the people to Christian life & activity. The session pray that the stay of these two servants of God in their midst, may be the means of stirring up the hearts of not a few of God's people at the Station & that the special mission to the educated youth of Poona may be greatly ~~and~~ blessed of God.

Poona being the intellectual capital of Western India, the session would take this opportunity of requesting these Messengers of the Cross to represent to the Society that has sent them out to India the clamant need of having regular evangelistic work carried on among the educated men of the city. The session feel that a special Missionary to such in Poona is a want, that requires to be

supplied at once.

Resolved to send a copy of this  
minute to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Wilder &  
Moorehead.

Ext. by D. J. Walker.

Moderator.

Letter Rev. J . M. Goheen, Kolhapur, India. July 11th, 1895.

I would like to ask if it would not be well hereafter not to include Mr. Wilder's expenses in the Kolhapur Station appropriations? It seems to confuse him and us too, as he is not a member of our Station or Mission either. I sincerely wish he felt called to settle down among the Marathi people as the language is coming back to him; but the Lord knows best what his work should be. He told me the Board had decided that he should remain in the work he has been engaged in, at least till the end of his first term. He and wife are spending the rains here.



REPORT OF ROBERT P. WILDER.

In my last report reference was made to work among the British and Scandinavian Universities. On my return to England I found the Student Volunteer Missionary Union so well organized that my services were no longer required. It was a joy to feel free to leave Europe for my life work in India.

Of the addresses given prior to sailing I might mention one in Liverpool to a large and representative audience, and one in the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London. I believe that as a result of these and other addresses much prayer has been offered up for the work done among western students and for the work to which I was going in the institutions of the east. Among the many friends who came to see us off on the last day were Dr. and Mrs. Pierson, Mr. and Mrs. Mac Innes, Mr. and Mrs. Broomhall and Miss Geraldine Guinness. The members of the Executive of the S.V.M.N. were present with the exception of one who was in Glasgow. The two representatives from Cambridge University said that several had planned to accompany them to London. Since Capt. Lugard was announced to speak on Uganda that day they had remained in Cambridge and sent their messages of farewell instead of bringing them in person.

We were soon on board. Friends crowded into the cabin for prayer. The last words were spoken, and as the Peshawur slowly moved away we heard "God be with you till we meet again." We were told that our ship was the one that had carried Alexander Mc Kay from his home land, and that had taken many other workers to their distant fields of labor.

Before the voyage was completed there were eighteen in our daily Bible class. Most of our time was spent upon the first three chapters of the Acts of the Apostles and the Pentecostal Gift.

I was asked to take the service of Sunday night Dec. 11th. The



burning sun had dropped into the Red Sea, and in the cool evening air many of the first and second saloon passengers ventured out to the service which was held upon the hurricane deck. Some were enemies of Christ, whose lives and language could not help the heathen. Others were passive Christians, who had lived and were expecting to live negative lives in India. One of these had said to me: "I do not believe in aggressive Christianity." Some of those before me had been Christians at home, but the further they journeyed from praying parents the further they drifted from God. The message given them is found in Gal. VI:7,8. I was saddened by the thought that all in that audience who refused to bow to the Spirit would not only be corrupt, but would prove to be centres of corruption among the heathen to whom they should bring eternal life.

There were many opportunities for personal work. I had repeated conversations with a ship's servant who had at one time been a Y.M.C.A. Secretary and had purposed becoming a foreign missionary, but falling into sin he ran off to sea. Every effort to bring him home, every appeal to his past joy and present misery seemed fruitless. On leaving the Peshawur I gave him our Bombay address. The first Sabbath on shore he called and as we knelt in prayer, came home. The following Sunday he brought with him three quartermasters from our ship, two of whom found Christ that week in the Salvation Army Meetings. We five had a praise meeting in the mission house at Byculla which shall never be forgotten. More than three months have passed and that ship's servant writes to me that he feels again led of the Spirit to become a foreign missionary.

In Bombay I addressed the American Mission High School and the Y.M.C.A. I was invited to speak to the Decennial Conference upon the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor and to take charge of the



Sabbath morning consecration service. At this and at the other morning meetings there was on the part of the Conference delegates an earnest spirit of prayer and a desire for more of the Holy Spirit's power for service.

There were between thirty and forty Student Volunteers present at the Decennial Conference. I had the pleasure of addressing them. They formed an organization with Rev. John N. Forman as Secretary, through whom they will from time to time speak to their fellow Volunteers at home.

The needs of Bombay moved me deeply. I am told that there is no missionary giving his entire time to work among the thousands of English speaking natives. This is said to be the second largest city in the British Empire, having 850,000 inhabitants. It is called the most important manufacturing centre in all the east and many years in advance of any other place in India in business importance. I feel strongly drawn to the students of this city.

When we left Kolhapur in 1875 we were drawn one-hundred and fifty miles by bullocks before we reached the rail-road. In returning I went the whole distance by rail. The bungalows built by my father, the old well and the rocks upon which I played as a boy brought back a flood of memories. Shortly after our arrival the native church gave us a meeting of welcome. I was much touched by the earnest words of the pastor and by the real joy of the people on hearing me say a few words in Marathi. During this visit to the city of my birth I spoke twice to the Christians upon the Holy Spirit, addressed the young men of the Mission High School, spoke to the members of the Y.M.C.A., and said a few words in Marathi to the children of the vernacular girls' schools which are in charge of my mother and sister. The many interviews with those who knew my father and knew me as a child, made it



difficult to leave Kolhapur. They begged me to remain and work among them.

On January 31st we visited Sangli and were much interested in the industrial work under Mr. Jolly's charge. It was a privilege to speak to the bright boys in Miss Sherman's school, and to look into the difficulties and encouragements of the life of this station.

During an enforced stop of six hours at Bangalore we visited the English Wesleyan Mission and called upon Rev. T. E. Slater of the London Missionary Society. Mr. Slater expressed a wish that I had brought with me a hundred workers to labor among the educated men of India, so needy and important does he regard this field. I received a cordial invitation to hold meetings during the rains in Bangalore and Mysore.

In Madras we were entertained at the Church of Scotland Zenana Mission House. Mrs. Longhurst's hospitality will never be forgotten. At the large gatherings in her drawing room Mrs. Wilder and I were introduced to most of the Christian workers in that city. My first address was delivered in the Memorial Hall at the Annual Meeting of the Y.M.C.A. A large audience had assembled to hear the Rev. F. E. Clark and myself. On two other occasions I addressed the Y.M.C.A. Mr. Mc Conaughy has been greatly used of God in building up such a vigorous association amid many difficulties. I also addressed the Y.W.C.A. and the students of Doveton College. On Feb. 8th I lectured to a large number of students in the Madras Christian College at the invitation of Dr. Miller who took the chair. The audience were most attentive while I urged upon them the privilege of believing in Christ and the duty of immediate confession at any cost. The Chairman expressed his regrets that I was unable to remain and follow up the lecture by personal work. He and the professors wish me to return.



It is evident that there is a great field for a college evangelist in Madras. During the six and a half days spent in this city I spoke nine times.

The poor railway connections necessitated a delay of twelve hours in Bellary. On alighting from the train we proceeded at once to the London Mission House where Mrs. Lewis gave us a cordial welcome. During the afternoon I addressed the English speaking students in the F.A. College. In the evening we had a delightful conference with the missionaries upon the Pentecostal Gift.

The long railway journey gave us opportunities for personal conversations. When we could get a Brahman alone with us in our compartment he was freer in stating his difficulties and franker in his admissions. Pray that the seed thus sown may bring forth fruit. The Holy Spirit can work as quickly in a Brahman's heart as in the heart of the Philippian jailer.

Feb. 12th was spent in Miraj. Dr. and Mrs. Wanless have their hands full of work in this important city.

On returning to Kolhapur I found that a deep interest had been aroused by Mr. Varley's meetings. Every afternoon at 5.30 I met educated natives in the bazaar Church built by my father. That I might not be interrupted I asked the audience to listen to me one afternoon, and on the following afternoon I should listen to their questions. They felt the fairness of the proposal, and as a result, during none of my lectures was there any attempt to ask questions, make remarks or raise a disturbance. Their attention was almost equal to that of an American audience. Several of the English residents attended the lectures, among them might be mentioned Mr. Candy, Principal of the Rajah Ram (Government) College, Dr. Sinclair, Durbar surgeon and Miss Little who is in charge of the Palace schools. The subjects of my lectures were "Students and Christianity," "Flesh against Spirit," "The



God of the Bible," "The Claims of Christ."

On the afternoons devoted to answering inquiries, Mr. Irwin and I assisted each other. Gladly was I a listener to answers given so clearly and fairly by Mr. Irwin. To show what thoughts are prominent in the minds of educated natives I will give some of the questions asked me. "There are many religions in this world. We see that the followers of religions never try to spread their religion except those of Christianity. Why do these Christians try to spread their religion with their own expense and at the cost of their own lives?" "Would Christianity be beneficial to India? If it would be, how?" "Does Christianity say that all religions except itself are false?" "What is the will of God? Is it fulfilled by the Christians?" "Do you know all the principles of Hinduism?" "What proofs can you put before us that Jesus Christ was the Son of God?" "Is the Holy Bible a divine work or a human one?" "If God is merciful how did He allow us to kill animals?"

In writing of these services and their effect I quote from the March number of "Indian Notes." "The attendance is quite good, the attention marked and the inquiry meetings (that is for asking questions) are full and promising. We are glad to notice that the inquirers are beginning to centre round the Atonement, the Divinity of Christ and the new spiritual life in Him. Many are showing much interest, and an attitude of sincerity that we hope will ripen into true knowledge of Christ."

Every morning at eight I spoke to the native Christians upon the deepening of the spiritual life and more aggressive work for Christ.

There is not room in such a report to even outline the many personal interviews with Christians and Hindus. Before our departure we invited the native church to tea. Here I had another opportunity to urge upon them witness bearing for Christ in this needy city and in the



outlying villages.

On our way to the hills, at the foot of the mountain, I gave a short Mahabhatti address in the moonlight, and three times since our arrival here I have preached in the village of old Mahableshtar. This is regarded as a very sacred spot because situated near the source of five rivers; but its holiness has as yet had no practical effect upon the villagers who are notoriously wicked.

An absence of eighteen years from India has made me rusty in Maharatti, yet it is a comfort to be understood by the people even though the genders are not always right and the vocabulary is limited. Oh! for more of God's power! That alone can break in pieces their flinty hearts and drive to the winds their flimsy excuses. The crash is coming and before long there will be a mighty ingathering in this Presidency, I fully believe.

In accordance with the very cordial invitation which has come to me from Calcutta, I am hoping to begin work there in June. After this I hope to be better prepared to confer with our Board as to the future. I am advised to see the chief student centres in India before settling down permanently.

In the forty-five addresses I have been permitted to give since landing, the attention as well as the size of the audiences has been most gratifying. Direct personal work should be undertaken for these student classes now.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) ROBERT P. WILDER,

Mahableshtar, April 7th, 1893.

Letter from W. H. Hammond

Recd. July 1895

COPY.

Allow me to refer to Mr. and Mrs. Wilder's proposed assignment to this Mission. When we consider his life-long relation to this field through his parents, and his native ability as a Marathi speaker (in which no present member of the Mission can ever hope to equal him), would it not be most reasonable to say that unusual considerations would need to be presented to the Board to lead it to refuse the request of the W.I. Mission that Mr. Wilder should be located at Kolhapur permanently? Although the Divine blessing has rested richly upon his special commission, must we not still look upon it as in its nature exceptional and temporary? The actual development appears to be different from the work at first contemplated. He seems to be less a missionary to students than to missionaries. The wisdom of the Board's maintenance of such an anomalous method seems open to question. Its worst effect would probably be on Mr. Wilder himself. As to the evangelistic work among student classes of India, in the various schools and universities, it would seem almost clear that to the success of so comprehensive a task a large community of Christian students is essential. There can hardly yet be said to be any such community in India. Mr. Wilder needs a home in a Mission, and he needs the guidance and the mild restraints of a Mission. Likewise this Mission, with every Station sadly under-manned, needs him as a re-enforcement; it needs his facile Marathi tongue; and it needs his sound and spiritual counsels in these vexatious questions of mission methods, which were never before so urgent upon us. I am sure, too, that the Mission would allow him



large liberty to travel to speak on important occasions at a distance.

Yet after all these things are said (and I mean them only in the kindest way) I realize that other considerations may bar his settlement at Kolhapur. For example, there may be ground to fear that his long and peculiar service before the public eye may have unfitted him for the comparatively obscure sphere of a member of this Mission. Perhaps, too, his physical inability to endure the Indian sun may indicate that for his brief time in India he may as well be left free from a change of work, that will at least be difficult for him."